

CDXC Newsletter

May 1991

Chiltern DX Club

Issue 73

Editorial/Chairman's Comments

After the good start to the year propagation has taken a severe turn for the worse over the last few weeks. Although KH9 and FW have been worked on 10 metres (not by me, unfortunately!), most of the time the high bands have been very quiet. What is more, at the time of writing there has been no sign of Jim Smith from A5 - I might have expected this as, other than ZA and XZ, A5 and KH9 are the only countries I need. Let's keep our fingers crossed, but as I write the news appears to be that Jim and Kirsti were not allowed to operate and have returned to Norfolk Island.

As I said in the last issue, this will definitely be my last newsletter

as Chairman and Newsletter Editor. As I write this enough members have come forward to volunteer their services that I feel confident we will have an effective and competent committee for the coming year, and I look to all members to support the new committee. I have been a member of CDXC for over 6 years, having joined when I first moved into its catchment area. During those 6 years CDXC has grown from a local DX group to a national one, with membership increasing at least fourfold. Interestingly, our membership is still well below that of BARTG or the UK Six Metre Group, which perhaps confirms what we all know - that DXing is very much a specialist aspect of the hobby. Although not all UK DXers are yet CDXC members, by far the majority must be.

Given that DXers are relatively few and far between, one major role of CDXC is to support what is known in the modern idiom as "networking", in other words to act as a forum for those of a like mind to get to know one another and exchange ideas. This is very important in what can otherwise be a very solitary hobby. Link ups between DXers can lead to all kinds of exciting developments. PacketClus-

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ter relies on cooperation to set up and operate the system. DXers get together to organise and take part in DXpeditions - while not a CDXC effort, as such, I was absolutely delighted to see the fine effort made by G3TXF, G3WVG and G3SXW from H44. It's great to see UK DXers putting on a major operation like this. I would urge all of you to use this newsletter as a medium for networking activities. If you want advice, help, are planning an expedition, etc, then let the newsletter editor know and it may well be that one or more other members can help, want to come, or offer whatever response is appropriate.

Indeed, any input to the newsletter is welcome. Notwithstanding what I said last time, there is certainly scope within CDXC's budget to produce a bigger and better newsletter. The major limitation is material - everything received usually sees the light of day in the following issue. Let the newsletter editor know what you would like to see in here, be it QSL information, expedition write-ups, or what you will. But most of all, please send in contributions of your own. Unless otherwise noted, all material in this newsletter has been written by me! The editor's job should be to edit, not to write the whole thing from scratch! Incidentally, one of the problems we have had in finding a newsletter editor is access to a PC. We are getting round this on a temporary basis, but if any of you

knows of a PC compatible going cheap (it doesn't even have to have a hard disc), then CDXC would desperately like to know in order to buy it for the use of whoever the editor might be at the time. Please let the new Chairman know.

Sadly, since the last newsletter was published we have learned of the death of another CDXC member, Don Roberts, G3FKH. Don had only recently joined CDXC but was an active DXer and a Cluster enthusiast, as well as being a keen member of the Hereford & District ARS.

Included with this Newsletter, for those of you not at the ARM, is a Standing Order Mandate. The Committee decided to encourage members to pay their subscription in this way as it will make the

CDXC Committee

President	G4LJF
(Tel: 0860 663296)	
Chairman	G3XTT
(Tel: 0734 724192)	
Vice-Chairman	G0HSD
(Tel: 08444 4762)	
Secretary	G3LQP
(Tel: 081 642 4956)	
Treasurer	G4GED
(Tel: 081 578 4484)	

Other Officers:

Awards Manager	G4GED
Social Secretary	G0HSD

Deadline for next newsletter: 14th
July 1991

Treasurer's job easier and save us having to send out reminders. Read carefully and note that there is a financial incentive being offered to pay in this way! All being well, for those of you not at the ARM, there should also be an insert with a brief resume of the ARM (not the formal minutes, these will appear later) and a list of the new Committee members, including newsletter editor. For next time, send your material to the new editor by July 14th at the

latest.

Finally, between 19th and 16th July I will be sailing around the Channel Islands and the French coast, and expect to have an HF rig with me. Do look out for me /MM or, possibly, from some IOTA islands in that vicinity (though any operations from land will be very brief as the others with me will be interested in sailing, not radio!). I will probably stick around the IOTA QRGs on 15, 20 and, possibly, 40m.

Secretary's Notepad

As I prepare this, my last Notepad as Secretary of CDXC, and prior to leaving the Committee after 7 years, it is not without a little sadness. Having seen CDXC grow in those 7 years from a membership of between 20 and 30 to the present total of over 130 members I think it's all been worthwhile.

OK, perhaps it could have been better in some respects, but the new Committee will have a solid foundation to go forward and make CDXC what we have always believed in, THE DX CLUB in the UK.

I shall continue to support the Club in every way I can, because I honestly believe we will achieve all our aims in the future. May I thank all past Committee members for their support and help which they have given me during my years in office in various posts, and wish the future Committee members good fortune in their work to make CDXC

the representative Club for DXers in the UK.

Since the last newsletter yours truly has achieved one of his ambitions, by visiting the Hamvention in Dayton, Ohio. What did I think of it?

Just one word - Brilliant. Over 32,500 attended the Convention over the 3 day period and, what was more pleasing, was the number of CDXC members present. They included G3LQP G3WGV G3ZAY G3YDV GW3CDP GM3YTS G4FRE G4PEO G4UDU DJ8NK K3ZO F6EXV - just like being at Daventry. The highlight of the Convention was the DX Dinner on the Friday evening. A great evening was had by all. DXers present included Martti OH2BH who thanked CDXC for his Certificate of Merit, 9K2CS who was one of the operators at 701AA, XU1SS, HS1ABU, HK0BKX, HK0HEU, to name just a few.

(cont'd on p.15)

VISALIA 1991

(Dick Dievendorff, AA6MC/G0MFO)

This year it was the Northern California DX Club's turn to host the 1991 International DX Convention in Visalia, California. Over 900 DX enthusiasts met at the Holiday Inn for a three-day celebration of the Deserving.

I drove from San Jose with Bob Wilson, N6TV, arriving Friday about noon. We registered (50 dollars), checked into our rooms, then wandered around checking out name tags.

Lloyd and Iris Colvin presented a slide show of their recent travels to several African countries. Their lifetime achievements are remarkable. 217 countries, 1.25 million QSOs, and the largest alphabetically filed QSL collection in the world. They have about 650,000 QSLs! They operate under the sponsorship of the YASME foundation which handles publicity and QSLs, but Lloyd and Iris fund their own travel. I owe at least a couple of new ones to this remarkable pair, and I was quite happy to see them.

The evening's cocktail party was hosted by Chod Harris, VP2ML, publisher of The DX News Bulletin and The DX Magazine. It was a good chance to find a bit more about the people behind the call sign badges. I ran into a lot of friends from the Northern California Contest Club, including W6OAT, K6TMB, W6CF, and N6RO.

Saturday was the main day of the convention. There was a RTTY forum that I skipped. I attended a session on Packet Radio (with W6GO, AK1A, and various SYSOPs). Dick Newell told us what to expect with Version 5 of the PacketCluster(TM) software. It looks like we'll be able to customise the spots we see. I for example don't want to see 50MHz spots. Other cluster users don't use HF spots. I will be able to enter my "need list" and the cluster won't send me any more spots for band/mode combinations I already have confirmed. Duplicate spots will also be filtered out, provided they are truly duplicates (same call, same frequency, same comment text).

I found it interesting that a user group in California had taken on the chore of publicity, new user registration, documentation distribution, and was funding in a major way some of the equipment and software purchases. The average individual contribution was about 35 dollars.

W6GO, one of the SYSOPs, referred to AK1A as "SYSGOD".

The Northern California Contest Club hosted a Contest Forum. Tom Taormina, K5RC, editor of the National Contest Journal, spoke to us about "Contesting in the '90s, the challenge of change". Tom gave us a review of past developments that had threatened to "ruin con-

testing forever”, including the VFO, Electronic Keyer, memory keyer, and now computer logging with partial callsign lookups and packet radio. His main thrust was that DXers and contesters were always “pressing the envelope” to improve their competitive edge, and that change was not only inevitable, it was desirable.

Following the speech, N6TV moderated a forum with K3ZO, K3EST, N6AA, and W6OAT. They debated a few topics of interest. K3EST predicted that there would soon be a 100-watt category in the CQWW. There was some debate over the use of packet radio in contests, the positions ranging from “best thing that ever happened to contesting” to “not a levelling influence”. The majority seemed to feel that it brought in more “casual” operators, who, it must be remembered, are the major source of QSOs for any of the major contest operations.

This was followed by an award session and a pile-up copying contest.

I skipped a couple of the slide shows to poke around the exhibits. ICOM and Kenwood were both there. Dick Ehrhorn had his new Alpha 87A on hand to touch and feel (auto tuneup in about a second). US Towers offered a factory tour. K6STI was demonstrating a new version of his Yagi Optimising program.

The DX Forum was fascinat-

ing. The panel members were K8CH (ARRL), W6CF, K8NA, W6RT, K5YY, and N7NG. After reviewing the activities of the DXAC for the last year and the pending issues (Penguin Island, Tatar Republic, North Korea), the panel asked the audience for their thoughts on the reasons for poor pileup behaviour. The opinions expressed included equipment deficiencies (too easy to transmit with the wrong VFO), DXpedition problems (too little power, too little experience, inconsistent application of their own rules), too much publicity, too many DXers, and too many awards. An informal poll was taken, and perhaps 2/3 of the audience agreed that there were too many DX awards.

The evening Happy Hour was sponsored by US Towers and the Northern California DX Club. I had a chance to watch a very professionally prepared videotape of the World RadioSport Team Championship held in Seattle. Our own Dave Lawley, G4BUO, has a speaking part! If you get a chance to view this video, don't missit!

The evening banquet was a great opportunity to swap lies with one's friends and listen to Bob Locher, W9KNI, give a thoughtful and humorous presentation. Several awards were presented, including a major one for Lloyd and Iris Colvin.

That evening found the NCCC hospitality suite open to contesters from around the world. I stayed until about 1 AM and then spent a quiet

hour or so talking with N6TV, N6AA, and W2GD (who recently made a big splash as P40GD).

Bob Cox passed around sheets with the High Claimed CQ WW SSB and CW scores:

The top SSB single op all band claims are CT3BH (14.9M), FG5R (12.3M), HC8A (12.3M). GW4BLE is listed as top UK, 12th in the world with 6.3M.

In the multi-single category, GU6UW (13.2M) is listed as 8th behind IQ4A (17.3M), 8P9X (15.4M), YM5KA (15.2M), EA8AGD (14.9M), CN0A (14.1M), LZ9A (13.4M), and 6D2X (13.4M).

In the CW leg, 4N9UN claims 4.6M for 1st in EU, OZ1LO claims 3,358,725, and GJ6UW claims 3,358,139. That's only 600 points between the claimed scores, so the log checkers will certainly have their work cut out for them!

In the multi-multi CW leg, PJ9A claims 39,269,469 and CN5N claims 35,457,988 for first and sec-

ond place.

Please contact me via packet or telephone (0962) 78443 if you'd like any of the other claimed scores.

These are only claimed scores; the logs haven't yet been checked. Some logs weren't included that will arrive before the deadline.

Sunday morning's breakfast buffet featured Martti Laine, OH2BH, and Wayne Mills, N7NG, with a presentation of their recent Penguin Island operation. QSLs were available on site for Ws and VEs. Copies of Martti's new book were also on sale.

I spent a very nice half hour chatting with Fred Laun, K3ZO, who I've talked to in every contest I've entered from the UK.

I had a great time, and will make every attempt to make it to Visalia again. I only wish I could have made it to Dayton as well!

Dick Dievendorff, G0MFO, AA6MC

WHERE DO WE GO NEXT?

Copies of Martti Laine's book have finally arrived in the UK. Martin, G3ZAY, is handling distribution and has spare copies available for those of you who didn't take advantage of the pre-publication offer. The price will be £15 inclusive of p&p. I have started reading it and am enjoying it enormously. Martti has been heavily

influenced by the writings of Hugh Cassidy, WA6AUD, and adopts something of Cass's style. The book describes many of Martti's DXpeditions, with black and white and colour illustrations, as well as reflecting on the mysteries of DX and DXing. A must for every DXers bookshelf to keep you going when the flux is down and the bands are dead.

DX MUSINGS

"There are two kinds of amateurs, those who are DXers and those who wish they were" (WA6AUD).

The main reason this newsletter doesn't carry DX news is that we assume all CDXC members to take DX News Sheet which, being weekly, can be a much more up-to-the-minute source of information. Having said this, we do try to carry the longer write-ups which there isn't space for in DXNS, provided we receive them in the first place, of course! We have also, in the past, carried a long-term calendar of forthcoming DX activity, courtesy of DXNS. Since this was discontinued there have been no grumbles, so I can only assume it served no useful purpose.

There was a fascinating article by W0CP in the May issue of *The DX Magazine*, attempting to compare the performance of several multiband antennas, specifically the Cushcraft A3, Hy-Gain TH7DX, KLM KT-34XA and Nagara T3-11dx (a Japanese monster on a 36ft boom). Without giving too many secrets away, computer modelling suggested that the KT-34XA looked excellent value for money, with performance very close to the Nagara. However, the TH7 appeared to be more robust and to have better front-to-back. Perhaps the most interesting comment of all, though, was an aside at the very end of the article to the effect that Hy-Gain have confirmed that a TH9 is under

development. This will be on a 34ft boom, and will have provision for 17 and 12 metre operation. Now if only I had a bigger garden ...

I note in the US radio club newsletters that it is almost standard practice to have regular tables of countries, oblasts, etc. worked. Maybe it is a natural modesty on the part of UK DXers and testers, but I have always found it strange that after spending every spare hour at the rig we are so reluctant to say what we have achieved. I realise that it can be construed as boasting, but scores can act as an incentive to others and an indication of what is possible. Any takers for a set of regular tables in here all time, by year, by band, or whatever suits?

The DX Magazine has been carrying a number of articles recently related to QSLing. Jim Smith has outlined his approach, QSL managers have defended why they ask for large numbers of dollars, DXers have accused managers of ripping them off, and so on. I suppose the saga will continue. It seems to me that the argument doesn't really affect major DXpeditions. If it's a big one like Bouvet then probably half the DXers who worked it will QSL direct and the money they include will cover postage, the cost of printing their cards, and probably leave enough in hand to cover

the cost of handling bureau cards as well. There may even be a surplus which will help to cover some of the costs of the DXpedition itself. Mind you, I was staggered to see a figure that, after the XW8DX/CW effort, some 40% of those who sent direct cards also sent a duplicate card via the bureau, presumably to cover all angles. This adds to the cost, the effort and the load on the bureau, and is surely totally unnecessary.

But what about the lesser expeditions. Let me take as an example our own contest efforts from GU/GJ. I haven't kept a very detailed record but the figures are roughly as follows: Given that these countries are by no means ultra-rare, we receive direct cards for about 1 in 8 of the QSOs. Usually these include \$1 or a couple of IRCs which leaves a little to spare after the cost of postage and the cost of the QSL itself. However, within about 2 years almost 70% of those contacted will have QSLed, the additional cards having arrived via the bureau. This means that bureau cards outnumber direct ones by about 5 to 1. The result is that there is a substantial net cost to QSLing if we are to reply to all these cards. So far we have done exactly that, but why should we? Should contesters and casual DXpeditioners to less rare spots be subject to what can amount to a large amount of cost for the privilege of going on the bands? Is it fair to expect them to send out vast numbers of cards, often for

each and every band on which they worked a particular station? This is enough to put contesters off for life! (Great, I hear some of you saying, but how often did you get a new slot from a contest expedition, and expect a bureau card from them?) Suppose a couple of youngsters put on a multi-single effort using their local club's call, so that they can operate with a GX prefix. Can they be expected to shell out for large numbers of cards to satisfy the prefix hunters? Any comments? Equally, can a 5B4, GJ or VP2M resident, for example, be expected to spend a fortune on cards to respond to bureau requests from people wanting every band and mode confirmed? Or do we need to accept, as US county chasers have for years, that the solution is to print your cards in such a way that they can be endorsed and returned by the DX station, so that his only expense is to purchase a rubber stamp and to pay postal costs to and from his local bureau?

Since 1st April 1990, the Frankford Radio Club DX Cluster has carried spots for 119 countries on 160, 194 on 80, 228 on 40, 288 on 20, 279 on 15, 271 on 10, 121 on 30, 203 on 17 and 152 on 12 (1855 in all, to save you counting), plus 301 DXCC countries, all this by 20 April 1991, which gives some idea of what has been on the bands in just 12 months. Can't be bad! I'm not sure how our own Clusters are doing in the DX rankings, but they

must all be able to apply for 5BDXCC by now! Talking about Cluster, most of the UK Clusters will be upgrading to the latest release of software very soon (this costs money, so remember to do your bit!). This release will have a number of new features including filtering of spots against your wants list. Even without that, though, I am now able to filter spots, bring up mail, WWV, etc, in separate windows on the screen, generate announcements, WWV messages, etc without having to remember how, and have the potential to link all this to my radio so that DX spots I put out will automatically gather the frequency from the transceiver. How do I manage all this? Simple. I have a pre-release version of Clusterm, the latest program to come out of the G3WGV stable. Watch this space for more information once the product becomes commercially available. You won't want to be without it!

Finally, Ron, G6LX, is ruining the day he sent his QSL cards registered mail to ARRL. The empty

packaging was found in Boston Post Office. Apparently some unscrupulous soul had assumed that because it was registered there must be something valuable inside, and had ripped it open. There was no sign of the missing cards - 500 for 5BDXCC, and over 200 for 80m DXCC. Very bad luck Ron. The only compensation on offer was \$15 from the US Post Office. This certainly won't be enough to cover the cost of replacing the cards and, of course, many of the older ones will never be replaced.

MYANMAR

Will it really happen? Will XZ finally show after all these years? I suppose if anyone can do it, we must believe that Romeo can after his superb efforts from 1S and YA. Incidentally, if for some reason you don't subscribe to DXNS you have been missing out on one of the most fascinating DX tales of recent years - the YA0RR story. Let's all keep our fingers crossed that we will have XZ in the log before too long.

ADVERT

For sale: Philips CMT 10W FM transceiver, crystallised for 70.325, 70.385, 70.400. 70.425. £60.

204BA, needs cleaning up but elements all nice and straight, £120.

Gem quad spider £15.

Switch mode power supply, heavy duty (ex-computer), £50.

Am currently low on IRCs, but expecting a few thousand more shortly - 40p each, plus postage.

Finally, I still have copies of my software review booklet (from last year's HF Convention) available at £4 each inclusive of p&p.

All above from Don, G3XTT, QTHR. Tel: 0734 724192.

G3PMR Station Logging Program

SHACKLOG/SLIM

Feature Summary

SHACKLOG and SLIM are a pair of programs which are designed to aid the radio amateur with the administrative tasks associated with the running of his station.

Both programs run on an IBM compatible PC, having a hard disc, and running DOS v2.1 or later, or OS/2 v1.1 or later. It is also reported (but not checked by the author) that the programs will run on Atari ST and Amiga computers using a PC emulator such as "AT ONCE".

Although not essential, to gain maximum benefit from SHACKLOG, a printer is required. Any monitor type is satisfactory.

SHACKLOG

SHACKLOG is designed to be the day to day station logging program. It is NOT a contest logging program, nor is it a DXpedition logging program.

SHACKLOG has the following main functions:

Real time QSO logging, with:

- Automated data entry of most fields

- QSL label printing

- Ability to view previous QSOs with station, whilst in QSO with him/her

- Automatic flagging of worked/confirmed status for current band/mode/country

- Logs QTH, region, name, band, mode, remarks, time on, time off, rst in, rst out, frequency, power, QSL sent/received, country, date, callsign

Country status - table of band vs mode vs worked/confirmed status for current country

Extraction of data from database for awards, contest logs, general station housekeeping. User can specify own search criteria, in simple manner. Use for example, for creating list of countries worked this year, list of outstanding direct QSLs, list of stations for particular award, or whatever list is required. Also includes sort facility.

User defined report formats for printing lists generated as above. Can print any combination of fields in any order. Output to screen, printer, or disc file. Print contest entries, award applications etc. By outputting to file, additional information can be added with your favourite text editor before printing.

Standard report formats in addition to user defined formats. Standard formats are LOG, Countries worked/confirmed by band, Countries worked/confirmed by mode.

CDXC NEWSLETTER, MAY 1991 - SUPPLEMENT

19 members attended the Annual General Meeting at the QTH of G3XTT on Sunday 19th May. The meeting heard reports from the outgoing Committee, and then proceeded to elect the new Committee before going on to a discussion of what the Club should be doing during the next 12 months.

First, the new Committee. For 1991/92, this will consist of:

President	-	Don Field, G3XTT
Chairman	-	Martin Atherton, G3ZAY
Vice-Chairman	-	John Linford, G3WGV
Secretary	-	Dick Dievendorff, G0MFO
Treasurer	-	Ron Glaisher, G6LX
Newsletter Editor	-	Andrew Shaw, G0HSD

In addition, Andrew Shaw G0HSD will remain as Social Secretary, while Paul Evans G4BKI takes over as Awards Manager. G3RUR was re-elected as Auditor.

The outgoing Treasurer reported a healthy financial position despite one-off purchases of contest and merit plaques sufficient to last about 5 years. The main item of expenditure was the newsletter, accounting for about half the total income (The Chairman reported that the average size of the newsletter had increased during the last year from about 12 pages an issue, to 18 or more). The other major items of expenditure had been a donation to the YA0RR effort, purchase of the plaques, and donation of QSL cards for VQ9AY. It was agreed to maintain the subscription at £10 for the coming year. This sub is due before the end of September. UK members are encouraged to sign the enclosed Standing Order mandate, which will save forgetting to pay your sub and will make the Treasurer's job easier. Ignore the wording which asks you to return before the AGM (too late for that now), but please complete as soon as possible. Below the line asking for account number, please insert a further line headed "Reference" and put your callsign here, as this is the easiest way for the Treasurer to know who the payment comes from. If you want to see a full copy of the accounts, please drop a line to the new Treasurer.

The outgoing Secretary reported that membership now stands at 133 (compared with 121 at this time last year). A full membership list is available from the new Secretary on request.

It had been hoped to have CDXC Sports Shirts available in time for the AGM, but these had not been delivered in time. It is now planned to have them ready for the HF Convention but, if you can't wait, please get in touch with the new Chairman. The price is likely to be between £9 and £10.

The new Committee will be looking at a number of topics from running a DX Day, to a possible donation to the XZ operation, to operating practices, a CDXC DXpedition, social events, and more besides.

Notwithstanding the newsletter deadline in the May newsletter, the new editor will be on holiday from 14th July so, if possible, get any input to him by 7th July. The next newsletter will also carry full minutes of the AGM.

G3XTT, 20 May 1991

Logging to full UK licence requirements, including power, and station closedown time.
Also logs CQ calls.

User configuration of display (type, colours), printer, and system defaults.

General label printing facility.

SLIM

SLIM complements SHACKLOG by allowing the operator to use his/her favourite contest logging program, and import the contest QSOs into the main SHACKLOG database after the contest.

SLIM can import data from:

Another SHACKLOG database

K1EA CT

G3WGV LOG

ASCII files, where the user specifies the file format.

The latter facility allows data to be imported from other unspecified programs.

During the import process, SLIM will prepare a list of suggested QSLs, by looking at the SHACKLOG database, and comparing each contest QSO with the country/band/mode worked/confirmed status.

The QSL list can be edited, and then used to batch print the QSL labels.

The powerful combination of SHACKLOG, SLIM, and G3WGV's LOG should satisfy all the logging needs of your station.

SHACKLOG and SLIM have been developed in the UK by Alan, G3PMR. For each order placed via this ad, a donation will be made to CDXC. Further information is available from:

Alan Jubb, G3PMR
30 West Street,
Great Gransden,
SANDY,
SG19 3AU

Tel: 07677 7913

CDXC
CHILTERN DX CLUB

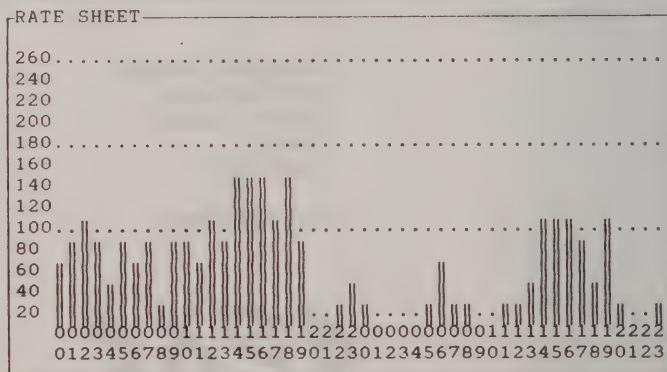
CONTEST CORNER

There is no group in the UK specifically to serve the needs of HF Contesters, so it seems appropriate that CDXC should devote space in this newsletter to contest news, especially as the space available in RadCom for HF contest news seems to be diminishing by the month. It would, of course, be ideal if we had a volunteer to take on this column on a regular basis, to compile snippets of news, details of forthcoming contests, claimed and actual scores, etc. Personally I always find this makes fascinating reading. For example, the Frankford Radio Club newsletter regularly carries member's scores in the major contest, and serves therefore as a spur to bigger and better things.

The latest FRC newsletter carried rate sheet plots from the K1EA program for all members who scored over 1m points in the ARRL CW Contest. Did you know CT could do this? Version 7 has a number of excellent new features including support for many more contests, as well as a DXpedition mode. Incidentally, John, G3WGV, and K1EA have

agreed to keep each other abreast of developments in their respective programs, which should be good news for all of us. To start the ball rolling, I reproduce the rate sheet plot for my own effort as GJ6UW in the last CQWW CW Contest.

The FRC newsletter also touched, in an editorial by N2EA, on contesting ethics, and particularly on whether it is ethical to alter the log after the event. For example, if your log has what is clearly a mistyped call (eg G33XTT) is it fair game to alter it? N2EA believes not, given that contests are as much a test of accuracy as speed. Any comments? He raised a number of other interesting issues, and puts an element of the blame for ethical problems on the contest organisers. If they don't make it clear what is and what isn't acceptable, there will always be some who, while not actually breaking the rules, bend them to an unreasonable degree.



GJ6UW (G3XTT) rate sheet in CQWW CW 1990

WPX SSB - UK CLAIMED SCORES

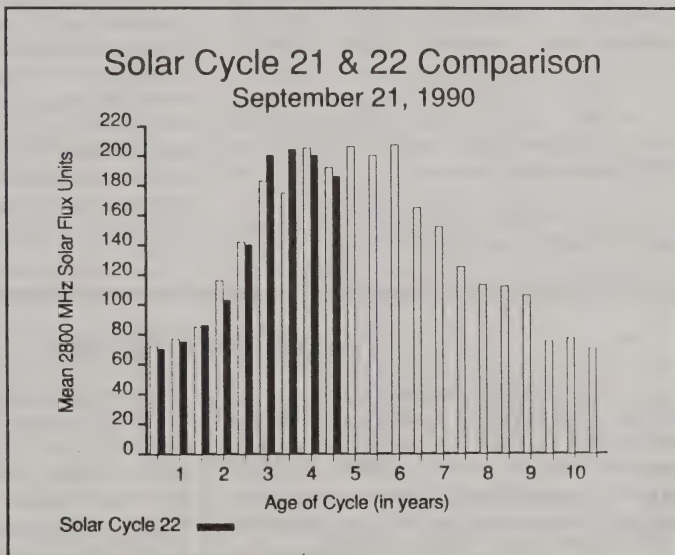
(Compiled by GW4BLE for the Cluster system)

SECTION	CALLSIGN	QSOs	QSO Pts	MULTS	CLAIMED SCORE
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Multi/Single	GB6BT	4494	12288	946	11,624,448
	GW8GT	4624	11369	1022	11,619,118
Single/All	GW4BLE	2901	7585	833	6,318,305
" "	GW0ARK	2375	5753	690	3,969,570
" "	G4BUO	636	-	334	566,464
" 14MHz	GW4OFQ	1285	2779	579	1,609,041
" 7MHz	G5LP	222	-	205	259,530

NOTES : The scoring bug in "CT" caused some confusion but submitted logs should be OK. Total number of hours used by the single ops were:- BLE (29.5), ARK (28.3), BUO (9.9) and OFQ (19.1). Roger spent too many hours down the pub Saturday night and over spent his rest period! Good luck to those entering the CW leg (May 25th-26th).

CYCLE 22

Back in December, and then subsequently in March, Woody Minar K9EF made some interesting observations in *QRZ DX* about the progress of Cycle 22. Woody has been tracking solar activity for 17 years and believes that the 2800MHz flux figure along with the Ap index (Planetary Alpha Index measuring geomagnetic activity at the middle latitudes) together form a more reliable tool for prediction purposes than the sunspot number. A plot of the 2800MHz flux figure (see graph) shows an almost exact correlation with Cycle 21, with the result that Woody is quite confident we can expect that the decay of Cycle 22 will start in the autumn of 1992 (or early 93 if we are lucky). This will be followed by 4 to 4.5 years of decline before Cycle 23 is born. Expect the next peak to arrive around the turn of the century.



NEW 144 MHz PACKET FREQS?

At the last meeting of the RSGB DataComms Committee, discussion of the reasons for congestion on 144.650 MHz quite naturally pointed to the arrival of the Cluster and general growth in packet interest. I suggested that RSGB VHF Committee should be asked to make available, additional frequencies for both Clusters and Mailboxes. The approach has been made and the following message put out by the VHF Committee Chairman:

"The RSGB VHF Committee will be considering the possibility of allocating more frequencies on 144 MHz to packet radio at its June 8th meeting. Any information, suggestions and comments (especially constructive ones!!) will be welcome.

Consider :-

(1) How heavily is 144.625 MHz used ?
(2) Would 144.6375 & 144.6625 be possible ? (i.e 12.5 kHz channels for packet radio)

(3) What other frequencies are available ?

If you know of any 144 MHz nets/chat channels that might be affected encourage their organisers to register them with the RSGB VHF Frequency Register. See Dec 1990 Radcom page 5 or contact G4TDL - QTHR.

We don't want to 'plonk' packet radio (or anything else) on top of anyone's local net but if these nets aren't registered we won't know about them.

Peter Burden, G3UBX, Chairman
RSGB VHF Committee"

In (1) above, 144.625 MHz is allocated for use of TCP/IP an aspect of packet with increasing interest. (2) is not on. Very few have equipment with 12.5 KHz spacing and those using rigs with 25 KHz spacing are going to have some very real problems. IARU do not recommend a change to 12.5 KHz spacing on 2 metres. New frequencies are desperately needed and they are available. VHF Committee records show that: 144.550 144.575 and 144.725 are not allocated or registered as being used by any local groups.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE write to VHF Committee Chairman giving your support to the allocation of additional frequencies on 2 metres. Access to Clusters and Mailboxes without 2 metres is relatively difficult and expensive. Almost everyone has 2 metre equipment for packet. Levels of congestion are becoming intolerable and we CAN influence the decision of VHF Committee. PLEASE WRITE NOW.

73, John G3HTA, UK Cluster Working Group DCC Rep

(Ed's note: Subsequent to this message by John, Dave G4ASR who is RSGB VHF Manager sent out a note to the effect that allocating more packet channels on 2m would be going in the face of IARU agreed policy. We might feel we are entitled to take this line, but what happens when another IARU member Society wants to do something with which we are unhappy? With very cheap - £25 - M band radios coming available on the surplus market, and conversion details appearing in the mags, is it really so difficult to gain access via 70.325?)

MEMBERS NEWS

Clive, G3NKQ, writes to say that he has now been DXing in earnest on 18MHz for just under a year and in that time has worked just over 200 countries. Yes, 200+ countries on just one band with no linear, no beam, no nets, no Cluster or other VHF info network, but just 90W and 2 indoor dipoles, one for

18MHz and one for 21MHz which can be tuned to 18MHz via an ATU. Clive likens the experience to "the old times", and comments that it proves high power is not necessary, even these days when so many people are running linears and big antennas. Congratulations on a very fine achievement Clive!

(cont'd from p.3)

Other guys I met for the first time included Don Search, VE1AL, Mort VE3MJ, Bill K1MM, DK2OC, W2NSD and many others, including old friends WA4VDE and K5OVC.

I travelled with John, G4PEO, flying to Cincinnati with Delta on a Tristar, then driving into Dayton with John in a Hertz 007 Thunderbird.

I have received mail from Steve, G4JVG, who has been allocated the callsign P29DX. He is currently only active from his work QTH 0200-0300 GMT, but hopes by June to be active from his own QTH. He sends 73 to all. He and his xyl Eva are enjoying life in P29.

The prospect of XZ being activated soon is good news. Like Laurie, G3UML, it's the last one I need. I have worked XZ many times from my first call VS1JF in Singapore, the late 50s. They were so strong you could work them on key clicks, hi.

The last piece of news is that I didn't become a BT pensioner during March after all. I was retained on a further 3 month contract which should, at least, enable me to think about purchasing a new transceiver, hi.

CDXC membership now stands at 133. A warm welcome is extended to George G3NOH, but the sad news is the passing of Don, G3FKH, who only joined us on 4th April this year.

That's it but, to conclude, one

from an old friend Bill WA4VDE, at Dayton: How do you tell the guy is Italian? Everything he touches, he winds up fully clockwise.

Take care, good DXing and CU in the XZ pile-up.

Roger G3LQP

IOTA DIRECTORY

IOTA Director and CDXC member Roger, G3KMA, has finally completed the mammoth revision of the Directory. The new Directory lists all current and potential island groups so that there need be no argument in future as to what might or might not count. The IOTA programme continues to grow in popularity, with many US amateurs now chasing the awards, and the first Japanese application just in. Beware, though. IOTA can be injurious to health and happiness! By next year's Honour Roll listings the top few will each have over 600 island groups confirmed, and that's a lot harder than working, say 5-band DXCC, because, whereas most DXCC countries are activated fairly regularly, many of these islands have only been activated the once. Miss one and you may not get another crack at it for many years. Holidays are out, so is work, and perhaps even meals and visits to the smallest room! If you think you have what it takes, send off to Roger today for your IOTA Directory - £5 to European stations, £6 outside Europe.

DXPEDITION TO SEPT ILES (NA125) AND McNUTT'S IS (NA126).

The Planning

Back in January I decided 1991 was to be a Dayton year. The dollar at two to the pound, no spring IARU conference, and acute withdrawal symptoms from the last trip two years ago meant that action could be delayed no longer. With a number of potential IOTA new ones and rare ones still unactioned by our VE friends the thought of combining the trip with an IOTA DXpedition was irresistible.

A thorough survey of the IOTA list, numerous conversations with Roger, G3KMA, who was revising the Directory, and examination of a number of reference atlases threw up Anticosti Island as the first DXpedition choice; both rare and accessible - an unusual combination. Air Canada confirmed that there were daily flights Monday to Friday from the town of Sept Iles to Port Menier and the London office of the Quebec Government supplied tourist brochures and a "list" of the two hotels on the island. All was set, with only the tickets to pay for, when I learned that K8JP and KJ8M were planning to visit the island over the Easter weekend.

A quick rethink was necessary and after phone calls (in broken French) to the Sept Iles tourist office, to the Corporation Touristique de Sept Iles, to the Sept Iles Airport, and to the Canadian Na-

tional Parks Service, I had established that of the two other candidates on the North Shore of the St Lawrence, the Sept Iles Group and the Mingan Group, only the former would be possible. The main constraint was access as there would be considerable ice and snow around in mid-April and none of the boat owners would have their craft in the water. This could be overcome in Sept Iles by helicopter and at a just about affordable price (as the islands are only a few minutes flying time from the airport) but overflights of the Mingans are banned by the Canadian Parks Service in case the seabirds are disturbed by the noise (or minced by the propellers!).

The next problem was shelter as it would clearly be uncomfortable operating in the open for any length of time, and I couldn't bring out all my camping equipment from the UK. Here I struck lucky. The helicopter company mentioned that one of their employees had a cabin on Grande Basque Is and immediately called him over to speak to me on the phone. Jean Blanchette immediately confirmed that his family owned several summer chalets and he was sure I could use one free of charge for a day or two. He also offered to help with car batteries, wood for the stove, propane gas, and water containers, and advised that access by helicopter would be possible in just

about any weather conditions. All the problems were solved.

With Sept Iles in the bag from a planning point of view the next thought was whether any further islands would be possible in the four days before Dayton. The other Quebec new ones were too far north, too inaccessible, or too lacking in shelter, but there seemed to be possibilities around Nova Scotia with Pictou off the North coast and a number of islands in the South.

More phone calls followed to Halifax Tourist Office and various Regional Directors of Tourism and the choice was narrowed to McNutt's Island in the South. Pictou, though inhabited by a number of families, had no accommodation and would probably still be surrounded by pack ice in April (it was).

In the South, as in Quebec, I was looking for somewhere accessible with shelter or accommodation. The Tusket Is looked to be too barren but the "Doers and Dreamers Guide to Nova Scotia", which I'd picked up in London, mentioned Cape Sable Is (connected to the mainland by a 1.2 km causeway and with several guest houses) and McNutt's Is (allegedly with a permanent population of 38 and "served by motor boats from the town of Shelburne"). The IOTA jury was still out on whether causeway islands would count, but Roger indicated they would probably be OK if there was some point at which water could flow underneath. The tourist office couldn't answer this question

so it was necessary to phone one of the guest houses: "Hello, I'm calling from England to ask if the causeway to your island is solid or if there is somewhere that water can flow underneath? The IOTA Director needs to know." To their credit they didn't hang up or ask for tickets to Candid Camera but gave the matter some thought and assured me (correctly) that the causeway was solid. Roger was still uncertain what the new rules would say, so that only left McNutt's where I thought surely one of the 38 residents would do bed and breakfast for a wandering IOTA lunatic?

More phone calls followed and the local tourist office put me in touch with a woman sheep farmer who was actually the only official resident on the island (the 37 others seemed to have vanished!) and who commuted regularly between there and her house in Shelburne. She did her best to discourage me with tales of her leaky boat, the dangerous crossing, the bad weather, the poor state of her house, the lack of power, etc. etc. but she eventually realised there was no point arguing with a lunatic and agreed to do what she could to help, on the understanding that on the day she might have other farm commitments and that the weather would in any case probably be too bad to get across. She also ask that I conceal her identity as she feared a flood of subsequent IOTA expeditioners approaching her for transport and accommodation.

The Execution

Everything went very smoothly. I made contact in Sept Iles with VE2XY, VE2KK, and Jean Blanchette who helped with preparations for departure and by 0830 local time on Saturday April 20th I was thigh deep in snow waving goodbye to the helicopter. The ground was still frozen solid so the Butternut was planted in the snow with radials laid out on the surface and the first station in the log was W4BAA at 1335z. The 2m handheld kept me in touch with the mainland through one of the two town repeaters and the chalet proved to be the most luxurious island QTH I've ever operated from. After the dank and mildewed cottage that GM6UW/P had used on the Shiants I had not expected too much and was delighted to find it dry, spotlessly clean, warm (with the wood stove going), stocked with extra food and drink supplies, cutlery, oil and gas lamps, a propane cooker, beds, sleeping bags, plates, saucepans, and even a kitchen sink!

During the summer the island is a popular tourist spot with nature trails and paths to several lookout positions but I was unable to get more than a few yards from the chalet without sinking into deep snow. Next time I take snowshoes.

The Butternut performed faultlessly but 100W was not really enough power to open up a good pile-up, especially in competition with the two or three other island DXpedi-

tions active that weekend, and I was a little disappointed to have only 400 QSOs in the log by the time the helicopter arrived to collect me on Sunday afternoon.

Transiting overnight through Montreal, I arrived in Halifax the following morning to face gale force winds and torrential rain for the whole of the 100 mile drive south to Shelburne. Fortunately the weather forecast for Tuesday was good and Mrs X agreed that we would try to cross to the island after breakfast.

I set out in search of a car battery and was lucky to be able to rent a used one at the local service station. The problem was that nobody knew how much juice it contained and I did not have anywhere convenient to leave it charging overnight. There was a generator, in an unknown condition, over on the island and I resolved that until I could get it going I would have to use a list system to minimise my transmit time.

Getting over to the island proved to be hard work as the boat (effectively a little rowing boat with an outboard motor) had to be dragged down the beach and then loaded in water deep enough for it to float but shallow enough not to flood my boots. An impossibility! The crossing of 1 1/2 miles was marginal as a steady wind from the south was causing a 2-3 foot swell but we made it at reduced speed and were soon hauling the boat up the slanting ramp of horizontal poles which comprised Mrs X's private landing

stage. My mental state during the crossing had not been helped by a local fishermen who watched us set out and offered the gratuitous comment "That's a heckuva load for a little boat in this weather"!

Mrs X's house on McNutt's was 100 yds up a gentle slope and I had to rush to get everything set up in time to QSO Reg, VE7IG, before he set off for work at 1445z. I made it with seconds to spare by operating from the grassy slope in front of the house and Reg is one of the first in the log. Henry, G3GIQ, was also on frequency and willingly took a couple of lists to help me husband my battery power. Moving indoors I found Mrs X ready with hot donuts and coffee prepared on her wood stove and we took a short break while IK2EUY readied another list. The generator which proved to be a 650W Honda in excellent condition was soon in service charging the battery and lists were dispensed with.

The weather forecast for Wednesday was good but I declined Mrs X's offer of an overnight stay as I have learned to distrust wide area forecasts and any delay would risk missing my connection through to Dayton. Accordingly I went QRT at 2000z and we were back on the mainland by sunset.

Wednesday was a good day and I was able to check out Cape Sable Is against the new Directory requirements. The causeway is a solid one but is officially 1.2kms long so the island will count as long as it is

>200m from the mainland at low tide. This poses a problem as a large sand dune is building up and has probably already reduced the gap to less than 500m. Today I think it qualifies but next year it may not.

I was briefly QRV /M on 21260 at around 1230z but conditions were very poor so I decided to head back to Halifax and finish the DXpedition portion of the holiday.

I must acknowledge the assistance of VE2DWH, VE2XY, VE2KK, Jean Blanchette, the Corporation Touristique de Sept Iles, the Mingan National Park Authorities, Heli Littorale Enr., the Esso garage in Shelburne N.S.; and especially Mrs X who was magnificent and without whom my visit to McNutt's Is would have been impossible.

And, on her behalf, a final message for others thinking of activating NA126; try the Tuskets or Cape Sable first but if it is to be McNutt's, approach the fishermen at the community of Gunning Cove who should be able to take you to the wharf at the northern end of the island. There is a hut there which should be usable if you haven't got a tent.

FOOTNOTES

Packing the Butternut

Preparing the Butternut HF6V for the rigours of airline baggage handling was a problem I'd given a

lot of thought to. A popular solution in Japan is to use a good quality golf bag (which has the added advantage of being recognisable to airport security) but I was looking for something a little smaller and cheaper. The eventual answer was a 42" length of 4" PVC tube with screw-on end caps - all from the local builders' merchant - and a length of webbing from Texas (total cost approximately £17).

This took everything (except the 1/4 wave 20m matching line) and was a great success allowing the antenna to be slung over one shoulder. The only change I will make next time is to tape up the screw on caps to prevent them working loose in flight. One dropped off on the trip from Halifax to Toronto and a small but important piece of aluminium tubing was lost.

Travelling with Radios

I was concerned about the response of the various security check-points to my carry-on bag of equipment. In practice, whilst there were no real problems there were plenty of stupidities.

At Heathrow the TS120, SWR bridge, microphone, and morse key were X-rayed separately. The first time through Montreal the entire bag passed through the machine without comment (!) but on the second occasion the IC2E was picked out as a hazardous item capable of interfering with the aircraft systems and I was sent back to the check-in

desk to get a special permit. On returning to security the permit was then rejected on the grounds that it hadn't been signed by the pilot! Sanity eventually prevailed and I was allowed through but told (contrary to London instructions) to pack the radio section in my checked baggage and carry the battery pack.

Moving to Toronto, the Butternut radials caused great concern and I was told I would have to leave them behind, until a supervisor eventually agreed they were harmless. At Dayton the X-ray machine had seen it all already and there were no problems but back at Montreal for the last time the TS120V caused great consternation. An airline representative was called and my assurances that I would not be trying to transmit from the cabin were eventually accepted, but I wonder how much signal would escape from a 10m dipole strung down the aisle? I must try it next time!

Working Split

The TS120V has limited RIT and with no external VFO I was limited to +/- 2kHz which was really inadequate. To the CDXC member who broke in to tell me that I would find it easier to listen 5 up; - thank you very much! If anyone has a VF120 or 130 for sale please let me know ASAP before I bite the bullet and order an IC735.

Martin, G3ZAY/NU2L